Discrimination against women workers

1817. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR:
SHRI RAVULA CHANDRA SEKAR REDDY:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether women workers in textile and food processing industries are being discriminated with stagnant wage rates and unhealthy working conditions; and

(b) the measures proposed to impart training to women to upgrade their skills to enable them adapt to changing modernization technology to avoid gender discrimination?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI SAHIB SINGH VERMA): (a) No, Sir. The Minimum Wages Act, 1948 provides for fixation of minimum wages for different categories of workers, and their periodical revision by the respective State Governments. The Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 provides for equal remuneration for men and women workers. The Acts do not make any distinction on the basis of sex. The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 and the Rules framed thereunder provide for various welfare and health measures for such workers.

(b) The training programmes for textile workers meant for upgradation of skill are provided according to the specific area/sector where skill upgradation can lead to higher income making ability and the training programmes do not discriminate on gender basis.

Women are encouraged to get training in Food Processing & Training Centres (FPTCs) with a view to upgrading skills and instill confidence in them to engage themselves profitably in food processing industries.

Transfer of labour reforms to State List

1818. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR:
SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether certain State Governments have demanded the subject of labour reforms should be under States and it should be transferred from Concurrent List of the Constitution to the State List;

(b) whether the Central Government acceded to this demand of the States; and

(c) if so, by when necessary amendments would be made in the Constitution?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI SAHIB SINGH VERMA): (a) The Ministry of Labour has received no proposal from the States for transfer of subjects relating to labour from Concurrent List to State List. However, while discussing the Agenda Item No. 4 relating to contract labour and contract appointments at the eighth meeting of Inter-State Council held on 27-28 August, 2003 at Srinagar, some States suggested for giving more freedom to the States to introduce labour reforms, and transfer of the subjects relating to labour from the Concurrent List to the State List.

(b) and (c) In pursuance of the powers derived by the Central Government from the respective entries in Concurrent List, a number of Central agencies have been created, over the times, to provide social security and other benefits on uniform basis. These agencies, to name a few, are Employees Provident Fund Organisation, Employees State Insurance Corporation, Labour Welfare Organisation, a number of Training Institutions under Directorate General of Employment and Training, Chief Labour Commissioner (Central) etc. With the transfer of these subjects from the Concurrent List to State List, not only the workers, country-wise, will be deprived of the existing benefits being availed by them, but also the States will take time to create their machinery to provide such benefits to the workers resulting in multiple-level of legislative protection to workers in States which may lead to inter-State migration of workers and industries. States are, however, allowed to make amendments even in the Central Labour Laws with a view to undertake labour reforms on their requests.

Further the establishments of some industries situated in different States will also be affected as the different States may adopt varying standards in enforcement of provisions of labour laws. The Central Public Sector Undertakings having installations in different States will be compelled to have different settlements under different Labour Laws for the same workmen.